

Reply-To: <lipman@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>
From: "David Lipman" <lipman@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>
To: <Harold_Varmus@nih.gov>
Subject: RE: follow up
Date: Thu, 4 Mar 1999 18:03:38 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
charset="iso-8859-1"
X-Priority: 3 (Normal)
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.2106.4
Importance: Normal

Harold,
Beyond the issue I raised in the previous e-mail about "rejection into e-biomed" there are only a few minor points.

You have a phrase:
"...establish a electronic publishing marketplace..."
Though the idea is clear to me I would avoid the use of the term "marketplace".

Here:
"More rapid dissemination of scientific information:
posting at the time of acceptance (no publishing lag time)
entry into e-biomed repository, even without formal
acceptance or
endorsement by an editorial board"

some addition here that alludes to the streamlined approval process of the governing board.

It may be worth considering that this more streamlined approval process may have a qualitatively different meaning than traditional review. I view it as a weeding out of the inappropriate rather than an endorsement/approval. Essentially it's a check on scope and generic publishability. This last issue could be determined in some general way by the governing board. Because the governing board will determine what journals/editorial boards are appropriate for e-biomed (again a weeding-out function) and what reviewers are appropriate, this governing board could set some broad and not-too specific criteria for "publishability". Once in e-biomed (BioMed-El ??) some papers will acquire greater perceived value in a dynamic way based on usage, commentary, citation, adoption by editorial boards, etc.. Some papers will enter e-biomed with some level of perceived value because of approval/endorsement by an editorial board. We are not trying to duplicate the review process using the streamlined approach - just filter out junk. Thus there would be two qualitatively different ways to get in.

You mention the possibility of advertising - I would be very leery of this

if this is government supported. Also, if commercial groups will be linking to this, that could lead to conflicts.

If you get good feedback after vetting the proposal and you plan to go forward publishing this then I hope you do this indicating that even though there are open questions, NIH will be going forward with the essential plan. If you publish the essay but leave it open as to whether it's really going to happen, there'll be a lot more churning by people who want to stop it or fundamentally change it.

David